

Message Text

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PAGE 01 HALIFA 00183 062125Z
ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMCONSUL HALIFAX
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1617
INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMCONSUL MONTREAL
AMCONSUL QUEBEC
AMCONSUL TORONTO
AMCONSUL CALGARY
AMCONSUL VANCOUVER
AMCONSUL WINNIPEG

UNCLAS HALIFAX 0183

E O 11652: N/A
TAGS: ECON EINV PGOV CA
SUBJECT:: QUEBEC'S CORPORATE LOSSES: WHOSE GAIN?

REF: MONTREAL 700

1. IN VIEW PRESS REPORTS OF ANGLOPHONE CANADIAN-AND
FOREIGN-OWNED COMPANIES LEAVING QUEBEC, OR THINKING
ABOUT LEAVING QUEBEC, CONOFF DECIDED TO POLL THE
DEPARTMENTS OF DEVELOPMENT IN THE FOUR ATLANTIC PROVINCES
IN ATTEMPT TO FIND OUT (A) WHETHER THERE ARE ANY INDICATIONS
THAT QUEBEC COMPANIES MIGHT BE PLANNING ON
RELOCATING IN ATLANTIC CANADA AND (B) WHETHER
ANY OF THE FOUR ATLANTIC PROVINCES' DEPARTMENTS
OF DEVELOPMENT WAS UNDERTAKING ANY SORT OF
PUBLICITY CAMPAIGN OR OFFERING ANY SPECIAL
INDUCEMENTS TO PERSUADE QUEBEC COMPANIES TO
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RELOCATE WITHIN ATLANTIC CANADA.

2. MR A J ROCHE, DEPUTY MIN OF NFLD S DEPT OF
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT, THINKS THERE IS LITTLE IF ANY LIKE-
LIHOOD THAT NFLF WILL BENEFIT EITHER FROM QUEBEC SEPARATIST
BID OR FROM INCREASING DEMAND FOR FRENCH UNILINGUALISM
THERE. ALTHOUGH THERE IS MUCH TALK AND PRESS SPEC-

ULATION ABOUT DEPARTURE OF COMPANIES FROM QUEBEC, ROCHE DOUBTS THAT ANY SIGNIFICANT PERCENTAGE OF ANGLOPHONE COMPANIES WILL ACTUALLY CARRY OUT RELOCATION. HE THINKS TENDENCY OF COMPANIES WILL BE TO HANG ON IN QUEBEC AND AWAIT A CHANGE OF PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT THERE. NFLD, HE SAID, HAS DONE NO RECRUITING AMONG COMPANIES WHICH MIGHT WISH TO RELOCATE AND HAS NO PLANS TO DO ANY SUCH RECRUITING.

3. DR THOMAS CONNOR, DEPUTY MIN OF PEI'S DEPT OF DEVELOPMENT, SAYS THAT PEI HAS HAD NO NIBBLES FROM QUEBEC COMPANIES TOYING WITH THE IDEA OF RELOCATION BUT THAT ANY EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST BY SUCH COMPANIES WOULD BE MOST WELCOME. HE AND HIS COLLEAGUES IN THE DEPT OF DEVELOPMENT HAD CONSIDERED THE FEASIBILITY OF RECRUITING WITHIN QUEBEC BUT HAD DECIDED AGAINST SUCH A CAMPAIGN LEST THERE BE SORT OF ADVERSE BACKLASH.

4. NEITHER THE NEW BRUNSWICK MINISTER NOR THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND DEVELOPMENT WAS AVAILABLE WHEN THE CONOFF CALLED FREDERICTON. HE WAS ABLE TO SPEAK, HOWEVER, WITH MR DAVID NELSON, EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO THE MINISTER. MR NELSON SEEMED SOMEWHAT CAGEY AND WAS UNWILLING OR UNABLE TO SAY WHETHER NEW BRUNSWICK WAS ALREADY BENEFITTING FROM THE RELOCATION OF QUEBEC COMPANIES WITHIN THE PROVINCE OR WHETHER ACTIVE RECRUITING WAS PLANNED OR UNDERWAY.

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TM MR LES SINGLE, DEPUTY MIN OF NOVA SCOTIA'S DEPT OF DEVELOPMENT, ADMITTED THAT NOVA SCOTIA HAD HAD EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST FROM QUEBEC COMPANIES CONTEMPLATING RELOCATION. HE ALSO STATED THAT NOVA SCOTIA WAS DOING NO ACTIVE RECRUITING AND HAD NO PRESENT PLANS TO DO ANY.

6. COMMENT: WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE NEW BRUNSWICK INFORMANT, THE DEPUTY MINISTERS OF THE OTHER ATLANTIC PROVINCES WERE QUITE WILLING TO STATE OPENLY THEIR HOPES THAT ANY COMPANIES DETERMINED TO LEAVE QUEBEC WOULD RELOCATE WITHIN THEIR PROVINCES. AS GOOD CANADIANS, OF COURSE, THEIR FEELINGS ABOUT THE DEPARTURE OF COMPANIES FROM QUEBEC WERE MIXED. THEY NATURALLY FEARED THAT ANY WHOLESAL DEPARTURE OF ANGLOPHONES FROM QUEBEC WOULD LOOSEN FURTHER THAT PROVINCE'S TIES TO CONFEDERATION, BUT AT THE SAME TIME THEY EACH HOPED THEIR INDIVIDUAL PROVINCE WOULD BENEFIT FROM THE RELOCATION TO ATLANTIC

CANADA OF THOSE COMPANIES WHICH MIGHT BE UNSWERVINGLY DETERMINED
TO LEAVE QUEBEC.

7. THE NFLD AND THE NS DEPUTY MINISTERS EACH MENTIONED
THAT NEW BRUNSWICK IS VERY HOPEFUL OF CAPTURING
COMPANIES LEAVING QUEBEC AND THAT IT WAS ADVERTISING
IN THE QUEBEC PRESS. PERHAPS THE NB PROVINCIAL
GOVERNMENT IS A BIT NERVOUS OR DEFENSIVE ABOUT THIS
NEWSPAPER CAMPAIGN, WHICH MIGHT BE THE REASON FOR
MR NELSON'S RETICENCE WHEN QUESTIONED BY THE CONOFF.
END COMMENT.

MOORE

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